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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: TALKING POINTS FOR JULY 23 CONSULTATIONS

¶1. USUN is instructed to draw from the following talking points for the July 23 UN Security Council consultations on Somalia.

Begin points:

-- I would like to welcome Somali Foreign Minister Ali Ahmed Jama to the Council today (or if the Prime Minister, I would like to welcome back to the Council Somali Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein). I would also like to thank the Special Representative for the Secretary General to Somalia Ahmedou Ould-Abdullah and (DPA briefer) for their briefings.

-- While progress is being made on the political front, the United States remains extremely concerned with the desperate humanitarian and security situation in Somalia. Today, I would like to make three points.

-- First, on the political situation -- the United States would like to reiterate its strong support for the agreement between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) that was initialed on June 9 in Djibouti. We urge all Parties in Somalia, whether signatories or not, to adhere to the terms of the agreement and to engage in peaceful dialogue towards a lasting solution.

-- We are supportive of the efforts of the UN Political Office in Somalia (UNPOS) to implement the provisions of the Djibouti Agreement, particularly their efforts to establish a Joint Security Committee. We support the relocation of UNPOS to Somalia as soon as necessary security conditions are put in place to provide for the mission's safety. We are pleased that the Department of Safety and Security has conducted a preliminary study on this topic and we look forward to their report.

-- Second, despite the substantial political progress that has been made in the last few months, the security situation in Somalia remains dire. We are troubled by the significant increase in reports of criminal activities in southern and central Somalia, as well as in the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, which led to the UN downgrading the security situation in Puntland from a Phase III to a Phase IV. The Council has stated its intention, including in resolution 1772 (2007), to take measures against those who seek to prevent or block the National Reconciliation Congress or a peaceful political process, or those who threaten the Transitional Federal Institutions or AMISOM by force, or take action that undermines stability in Somalia or in the region.

-- In the Djibouti Agreement, a joint request from the TFG and the ARS was made to the Security Council to authorize and deploy an international stabilization force within the coming four months. In recent weeks the Prime Minister of Somalia Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein has called on the UN to deploy a UN peacekeeping operation to Somalia as soon as possible. The United States supports this request and stresses the need for the Security Council to begin serious

deliberations on what role the UN should play in addressing the dire security situation in Somalia.

-- Security Council Resolution 1814 specifically requested the Secretary General "continue his contingency planning for a possible deployment of a UN Peacekeeping Operation to Somalia to succeed AMISOM, including of additional scenarios...and considering additional options for the size, configuration, responsibility and proposed area of operation of the mission depending on different conditions on the ground." The Council asked the Secretariat to report on this planning within 60 days. The most recent report does not appear to reflect these additional plans. Therefore, we urge the Secretariat to provide the Security Council with further contingency planning, as requested in Resolution 1814, by August 15.

-- Last month, the United States, France, the UK, Panama, and several other nations co-sponsored Resolution 1816, which authorized states, working in collaboration with the TFG, to enter Somali territorial waters to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. We have been encouraged by the response we have received to 1816 from the international community and we continue to urge all states to assist in this important effort. Those without naval capacity can also help by providing logistical assistance in the disposition of victims, witnesses, and suspected pirates.

-- The United States reiterates its strong view that the international community must act now to help create the conditions for lasting peace and stability in Somalia. The people of Somalia cannot wait for the ideal conditions to arise before the UN gets involved in helping to stabilize the security situation there.

-- Third, the United States is very alarmed at the continuing humanitarian crisis in Somalia. The Secretary-General stated in his July 16 report that humanitarian condition in Somalia has "taken a dramatic turn for the worse," and we agree with this assessment. The ongoing conflict, increasing food prices, and deepening drought have threatened to create a humanitarian disaster on an almost unimaginable scale. Some 2.6 million people in Somalia, 35% of the entire population of that country, now depend on some type of humanitarian assistance. The UN estimates if the situation continues to deteriorate that number could increase to 3.5 million.

-- Compounding this crisis is the appalling actions by terrorists, insurgents, and organized criminal groups in targeting humanitarian workers for assassination and kidnapping. This year alone, 15 aid workers have been killed, deliberately targeted by various groups. In the last several weeks, the Al-Qaeda affiliated Al-Shabaab have claimed responsibility to the cold-blooded executions of three aid workers. Those who commit these despicable acts against those willing to risk their lives to help others, need to be held accountable for their actions. We call on the Somali people to reject the actions and propaganda of those responsible for these horrific actions, and to support those who have signed the Djibouti Agreement and are working toward a peaceful Somalia.

-- We are cautiously optimistic that, with the strong support of the international community, recent political gains could translate into an improved security situation in Somalia. However, the Somali people need increased UN assistance and intervention now. We urge the Secretariat to continue its further contingency planning for a possible UN Peacekeeping Operation expeditiously and to present these further options to the Security Council for review by August 15. Thank you Mr. President.

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